

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for writing and erasing a non-volatile memory area, comprising the steps of:

writing at least one release pattern into first predetermined subareas of the memory area, after an error-free writing of the memory area;

providing second subareas in the memory area, the second subareas ~~enclosing~~ being situated in front of or behind each of the first subareas; and

writing into each of the second subareas with an invalidity pattern prior to an erase operation.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the release pattern and the invalidity pattern do not correspond to contents of erased modules of the memory area.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of, prior to reading out a written, non-volatile memory area, checking the second subareas for a presence.

4. (Currently Amended) A controller comprising:

a storage device having a non-volatile memory area for storing control function programs and control function data, the memory area including at least one first subarea for release patterns which occupy subareas in the written memory area, the memory area further including second subareas for invalidity patterns which ~~enclose~~ are situated in front of or behind each of the at least one first subarea.